

CIA funding: an alternative

Early last year then Pres. Eugene Groves of the National Student Assn. revealed that his group had for years been secretly funded by the Central Intelligence Agency. The disclosure caused a storm among student political groups that disturbed the air around the world.

Following the announcement of NSA's undercover funding, it became apparent that the CIA is in the business of passing out money to numerous cooperating political and philanthropic organizations both in the United States and abroad.

Naturally, the disclosure had political repercussions. Sen. Robert Kennedy let drop at a background news conference the information that Pres. Johnson and some high officials in his administration knew about the CIA funding activities all along, and liberal political opponents had one more reason to be unhappy with their president.

JOHNSON RESPONDED TO the criticism by appointing a committee under Sec. of State Dean Rusk to look for new ways of financing the projects-currently supported by the CIA. Rusk has been in no hurry to make his report, although James Clark, the executive director of the committee, promises one soon.

Texas Democratic Sen. Ralph Yarborough, impatient with Rusk's committee, has gone ahead with his own proposal in the Senate. His bill would set up a government foundation, supported by federal funds and private donations and governed by an 11-member civilian council. A Senate subcommittee began hearings on the bill this week.

Yarborough's proposal makes it possible for the government to carry on the CIA's funding projects, but away from the absurd secrecy of the present arrangement. It deserves strong support in the Senate.